

(1) The foundation of the infinitesimal calculus; (2) The genesis of the conception of imagination and the progressive explanation of the theory of functions; (3) The history of the discovery of Newtonian gravitation, and its influence on the development of mechanics and physics; (4) An exposition of the necessities which led to thermo-dynamics, the conservation of energy, the principle of Carnot-Clausius etc., etc.; (5) The history of biological methods.

IV. The History of Philosophy: (1) The aim of the method of the history of philosophy; (2) Progress in the history of philosophy; (3) Can the study of ancient philosophy be made useful? (4) The place of the sophists in Greek philosophy; (5) Can the historical evolution of the ideas of Plato be determined? (6) The principles of natural science in Aristotle; (7) The idea of evil in Plotin; (8) The value of Scholasticism; (9) The place of Descartes in the general history of thought; (10) Spinoza and Leibnitz.; (11) The rôle of Hume's philosophy in the development of modern thought; (12) Kant's criticism and psychology; (13) Fichte's ethics; (14) Hegelianism in actual philosophy; (15) The tendencies in contemporary philosophy.

POPULAR MUSIC.

The present number of *The Open Court* contains a short article by C. Crozat Converse, a well-known American composer of both choral and popular music, in which he presents his views on the rise of popular songs and the non-acceptability of noble melodies to the American public. The general conclusion, although not expressed in words, seems to be very saddening, for it would indicate that we shall never have good national hymns or an elevating popular music. The cause of it lies in the paramount influence which the broad masses of the people exercise in America.

This is a feature of American life which has been pointed to again and again with great satisfaction by representative champions of European systems of government. The truth is that the masses of the people are, and always will remain vulgar. If their taste shall decide in matters intellectual, we cannot expect that America will be productive of anything good in any line of progressive work. If the democracy of a republic means that the majority shall dominate, then there is no prospect here for the artist, the scientist, the philosopher, and the poet.

Republicanism does not mean that the majority shall rule. The laws shall rule and the government shall administer the laws. The majority has the right only to decide who shall be entrusted with the work of administration.

Republicanism removes the rule of princes and abolishes prerogatives of an aristocratic minority, but it should neither endow the majority with sovereign power, nor should it abolish the functions of an aristocracy. The rule of the majority would be not less a misfortune than the elimination of aristocratic influences. American progressiveness has shown itself first of all in the useful arts, in feats of engineering of all kinds, in the enhancement of mechanics, and American inventiveness is mainly limited to that which is of immediate practical use, such as labor-saving machinery, locomotives for heavy traffic or rapid transit, etc.

Our art critics have pointed out that American art and poetry are lacking in originality and depth; they are sometimes powerful, but rarely noble and elevating. As a rule, they appeal to the masses, and not to the taste of the cultivated few. Most of the plays performed at our large theaters are stale and unprofitable; they are more shows than dramas; they are not a development of action and thought but exhibitions of scenic effects and of gaudy dress. The question has

often been raised how this unhappy state of affairs can be mended. We have not the slightest doubt that the conditions will be improved, and they may follow the law of evolution, that is to say, the course of progress will begin with an attention to the immediate and most pressing needs of practical life, proceeding to the higher but not less important domain of intellectuality.

The advance of American civilisation shows that to a great extent a development for the better has set in. The foundation of great universities is a step in this direction. And endowed theaters which shall set the standard of musical and poetical taste will be added in time. Endowed newspapers which should be started on a limited basis, perhaps in the form of weeklies, will have to follow. As a matter of course, they must be rigidly non-partisan, and take the ground of a purely ethical point of view.

The musical and artistic taste of the masses is not worse here than in Europe. The war songs that were actually sung in the German army, both in 1813-1815 and 1870-1871, were by no means the classical music of later days. The German warriors did not sing either Koerner's or Arndt's songs, but ragtime-melodies, with words of the coarsest character. It is a fact still that the officers of the German army have great trouble with the singing instinct of the private soldiers, generally venting itself in songs which not only betray a lack of musical taste, but also abound in rudities and even shocking indecencies. The regulations in the German army enjoin officers not to permit such breaches of good behavior; but, nevertheless, partly through connivance, partly through actual encouragement on the sly these songs spread like wild-fire. But these songs do not become known outside of the army and the elevating songs of the German nation are produced and known in a radically different atmosphere.

We may here on American soil allow public opinion to be too much dominated by the taste of "the boys," but this consideration exercises perhaps an educational influence on them, and may in time serve as a leaven that will raise the masses to a higher musical understanding.

I see no cure for the vulgarity of our national taste in music and other arts than by the foundation of independent art centers which would be looked up to as an authority, and thus organise the better elements constituting an intellectual aristocracy,—an aristocracy which is not based upon ancestry, but upon intellectual and moral superiority.

P. C.

LIFE AFTER DEATH. A COMMENT ON HOFFMANN'S STORY OF "TANTE FRITZCHEN."

To the Editor of The Open Court:

"It is awful, when two grow apart so and one of the two has to realise and know it. O God, I am tired, and want to sleep, just to sleep!" (*Tante Fritzchen*, Hoffmann.)

To those who cannot believe in a revelation, the position taken by "Tante Fritzchen" which so shocked the good pastor, will assume less or more importance, according to their intellectual environment. The sea of opinion will have no beaten path for such to pursue. Each, from Hans Hoffmann's story as a centre, may move out on one of as many lines of reflexion as a circle has radii.

But, to those who believe in a revelation,—let it be made through a carpenter under the shadows of Lebanon, or through a prince of the plains under the Himalayas, or through a shepherd of Sinai, or a camel-driver of Arabia,—the